

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT: First National Women's Congress, Held in
Sao Paulo, Brazil

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1. The first National Women's Congress, sponsored by the Communist-front Federacao das Mulheres do Estado de Sao Paulo (Federation of Sao Paulo Women-FMESF)¹, was held on 29 and 30 July 1951 at Rua dos Patriotas, #1120, in the Ipiranga section of Sao Paulo. The announced program dealt with the protection of children, the high cost of living, the peace question, and the organization of the Communist women's movement.

Background and preparation for the Congress:

2. Approximately two years ago the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) founded the Federaçao das Mulheres do Brasil (Federation of Brazilian Women--FMB)² in Rio, under the direction of Branca Fialho de Almeida³, who began traveling throughout the various states organizing state women's unions as FMB affiliates. Soon afterwards the Federaçao das Mulheres do Estado de Sao Paulo was organized, under the presidency of Eunice Catunda⁴, a militant Communist since 1937, at which time she used the pseudonym "Jacy". Throughout the State of Sao Paulo, particularly in the industrial areas, women's centers or unions, controlled by the FMESP, were founded. In May 1951 the FMB decided to hold a national congress, and, in preparation for this, many district and state congresses were held throughout Brazil to select delegates.

Delegates to the Congress:

3. The delegates attending the Congress, all reported to be Communists, were as follows:

Rio de Janeiro (Federal District)

Zora Saljan Braga
Nair Couto
Matilde Garcia
Maria da Gloria
Maria Afonso Lins
Herminia Loureiro Lopes
Maria Luiza
Eline Mochel Matos
Conceicao Menezes
Yedda Menezes

Maria Augusta Miranda
Jacinta Passos
Mista Campos da Paz
Jean Sarkis
Noemia Seljan
Laura Correia da Silva
Maria Segovia da Silva
Eunice Veiga
Isa (Inu)
Ana (Inu)

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State of Ceara

Margarida Calado
Maria Luiza Cavalcante
Fernanda Ferreira

Zelia Mesquita
Maria Perpetua
Maria Rodrigues

State of Minas Gerais

Julia Silva Amarante
Olivia Calabria
Valkiria Gomes Jardim
Dr. Maria Jose Lasoasas

Zuleica Melo
Luciola Souza Rosa
Eliete Stolzenberg

State of Rio Grande do Sul

Orfila Almeida
Anita Couto
Maria Langing

State of Bahia

Maria Brandao Reis

State of Pernambuco

Neusa Cardia
Maria do Carmo
Juracy Gois

State of Rio

Guicomar Calazans Damasceno

Republic of Argentina

Leonor Vasquez Aguilar
Rosa Hardy

Uruguay

Amalia Cogo Peres 5

In addition to these individuals, there were delegates from other states representing affiliated and non-affiliated organizations of the FMB; factory groups; farmers; professional unions; artistic, cultural, and welfare associations; and delegates collecting pro-peace signatures.

Results of the Congress:

4. On 30 July, the agenda was discussed, and the resolutions adopted were announced at the closing session of the Congress held that evening. Branca Fialho de Almeida again presided over the gathering, and the following delegates made speeches:

Iraci Almeida	-	delegate from Pernambuco
Anastacia Caser	-	" " Parana
Francisca Meirelles	-	" " Giclas
Inez Luiza de Oliveira	-	" " Alagoas
Jacinta Passos	-	" " Rio de Janeiro
Barbara Menezes da Rocha	-	" " Minas Gerais
Nosmia Serpa	-	" " Rio de Janeiro
Maria Antonia Silva	-	" " Mato Grosso

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The following were elected to the new FMESP directorate:

Eunice Catunda	-	President
Antonieta Sales	-	Vice-President
Ofeilia de Amaral Botelho	-	Secretary-General
Lucinda Oliveira	-	First Secretary
Matilde Carvalho	-	Treasurer

The resolutions approved at the close of the Congress are as follows:

Defense of Peace

- a. Intensify the fight for peace through campaigns which will clearly demonstrate the dangers of war. The FMB objective is to collect 750,000 pro-peace signatures.
- b. Urge the cessation of Korean hostilities.
- c. Intensify the opposition to sending Brazilian troops anywhere in the world by organizing commissions of mothers of draftees and war widows, holding meetings, and petitioning legislative chambers and governors.
- d. Create a national committee for the release from prison of Elisa Branco, to be composed of the FMB president, presidents of state women's organizations, and other prominent personalities.
- e. Send a message to the heroic Korean women.
- f. Send a message to the World Peace Council reaffirming the Brazilian women's support of its efforts to effect fraternity among the people.

The fight against the high cost of living

- a. Organize a national campaign to combat the high cost of living and to urge lower prices for necessities.
- b. Create commissions of housewives within the suburbs to fight the high cost of food.
- c. Set aside a day each month to combat the high cost of living. Instruct housewives and others not to buy high-priced commodities on that day.
- d. Fight with women workers for an equal salary for equal work and a general increase in wages.
- e. Urge the competent authorities to create a uniform, nation-wide price index for necessary commodities and to combat speculation and the black market.

Defense of Children

- a. Create committees for the protection of children in every women's organization.
- b. Urge the local governments to construct schools and provide free uniforms, shoes, school supplies, and lunches.
- c. Urge the construction of parks, nurseries, and foundling hospitals for children in all the poor sections of the city, in the factories, and in the rural sections.
- d. Urge the prohibition of the sale of objectionable magazines and of candy which is wrapped in pictures intended to exploit the natural curiosity of children.

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- e. Fight the exploitation of child labor.
- f. Support and participate in the International Conference in Defense of Children to be held in January 1952 under the sponsorship of the World Federation of Democratic Women.
- g. Fight for the protection of motherhood, guaranteeing maternity leave on full salary for three months.

Organization of Feminine Movement

- a. Urge all members to work harder on problems concerning women and children. Work together with all feminine organizations, which have at least one point in common with the FMB program.
- b. Urge all affiliates to organize in a more varied form to work for specific necessities, such as piped water, paved streets, schools lunches, better transportation, medical clinics, and recreational parks; and create commissions of mothers to defend each problem.
- c. Plan the organization of the directorates.
- d. Organize a plan of activities to maintain interest in each organization, such as classes to teach reading and writing, sewing classes, children's theaters, and cooking classes.
- e. Urge the creation of auxiliary directive departments in each affiliate.
- f. Appoint a commission on statute reform to present a reform project within 30 days.

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(1) Cf. [REDACTED]

(2) Cf. [REDACTED]

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(3) [REDACTED] Comment. Reported in May 1951 to be head of a PCB commission in charge of infiltrating groups of refugees from the drought areas of the northeast. [REDACTED]

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(4) [REDACTED]

(5) Also reported as Amalia Rita Cogo de Perez Gonzales.

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